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SUBJECT: DAWA LEADER HOPEFUL PROVINCIAL ELECTION DATE CAN BE SET SOON

Classified By: Deputy Political Counselor Robert Gilchrist for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

Dawa Would Like to See Provincial Elections Soon

¶11. (C) In a June 9 meeting with Acting Pol Couns, Dawa leader and deputy Chair of the Shi'a Coalition Ali al-Adeeb said the provincial powers law was "almost done" and that when it was done a date for provincial elections could be set. There was no need to revise the elections law, al-Adeeb continued, simply to set a date that could be as soon as four months from passage of the provincial powers law. Al-Adeeb said that most Shi'a parties wanted provincial elections in the near future, "except perhaps the parties that have power in the provinces (e.g., ISCI)." He acknowledged that security issues could present technical obstacles in "hot" places like Baghdad and Diyala. Al-Adeeb said he supported an open list system as more democratic but noted it would be "harder to count" the returns. He identified Mosul as an area likely to see a particularly hard struggle over elections and suggested that the various parties might want to agree on an outcome beforehand "like the two Kurdish parties did in their elections" so that the vote would be accepted by all.

¶12. (C) Acting PolCouns told al-Adeeb that the USG considered holding provincial elections, particularly in some of the "hot" provinces, as a key step in reconciliation. The earlier elections were held, he continued, the greater force MNF-I could bring to bear to ensure security during the elections. Al-Adeeb conceded these points, agreeing that MNF-I help in providing election security would be welcome and urging that the elections plan take into account IDPs' rights (he gave the example of Shi'a from Diyala now living in Karbala or Wasit).

Article 140 Implementation Must Be Delayed

¶13. (C) On the constitutional review process, al-Adeeb said that the committee had done good work and that the serious issues remaining needed to be resolved by bloc leaders. He said that Dawa supported the CRC's recommendations to increase the power of the federal government vis-a-vis the regions and provinces (Articles 110-115), arguing that the provinces did not currently have the capacity to handle increased powers. Al-Adeeb said that a compromise on the issue of personal status (Article 41) was in the works that would allow each sect or group to choose the codes for its members. On Article 140, he noted that Dawa fully supported implementation of the constitution but that "the reality on the ground" did not allow for implementation of some provisions. For Article 140 to be implemented, he continued, there would need to be a census, but that was impossible given the current security situation. He therefore supported

a delay in Article 140 implementation.

Fallout from the Cairo Declaration

14. (C) Acting PolCouns raised the "Cairo declaration," saying he hoped the storm it had created would quickly die down so that Iraqi leaders - Shi'a, Sunnis, and Kurds - could continue with pressing business. He noted the U.S.'s firm support for the Maliki government and for participation in the political process in Iraq. Al-Adeeb said that the Shi'a concern was not Allawi, "who has spent all his political capital," or the front specified in the declaration, "which has already failed." The Shi'a concern, he said, was that the Arab countries "pushing" this initiative would continue to look for other horses to back. While he acknowledged and appreciated U.S. support for the Maliki government, he continued, the U.S. had not convinced its Arab allies. He also claimed that the incident showed "the problem with reducing the restrictions on the return of ex-Baath party members."

Bio Note

15. (C) Ali Mohammed Al-Hussein Ali Al-Adeeb was born in Karbala on September 5, 1944. He graduated from the University of Baghdad in 1964 with a degree in Education and Psychology. He taught in several teaching institutes in Abu Ghraib (1965) and Karbala (1965-1973), worked as an assistant researcher at the Ministry of Education in Karbala (1971-1973), and then taught at two middle schools in Karbala

BAGHDAD 00001924 002 OF 002

(1973-1980). He left Iraq for Abu Dhabi in 1980, serving as an employee at Fajr newspaper (1980) and then as the director of the Educational Compound of the Martyr Sadr (1980-1982; NFI). He moved to Tehran and worked as a director of several SCIRI bureaus from 1982-1986 and then taught at the Institute of Imam Rida (in Qom); the Qom Institute of the Prophet; and the University of Imam Sadiq (in Tehran) from 1986-1990. He became director of Dawa's political bureau in Tehran in 1990 and held that post until 2003, when he returned to Iraq. He has since served in Iraq's parliamentary assemblies and is currently the deputy Chairman of the Shi'a coalition. He attends the CoR regularly. He is a gentleman toward visitors, gracious, polite, and attentive. His interpretation of events is often quite sectarian: he once indicated that he believed reports that U.S. helicopters were resupplying al-Qaeda fighters at night in towns on the outskirts of Baghdad. Though one of the top three members of the Dawa party, he does not have the trappings of an organizational leader. He works with only one assistant; neither he nor his assistant speaks English, and neither appears technology-savy. Al-Adeeb is married to Kelod Mohammed Hussein (b. July 1, 1948). End bio note.

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